

Intangible Cultural Heritage Update

News and notes on Newfoundland and Labrador's Intangible Cultural Heritage Program

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Quidi Vidi Built Heritage/ICH Fieldschool Now Underway

Under the direction of Dr. Gerald L. Pocius, the Folklore 6020 field school introduces beginning graduate students to ethnographic documentation methods related to landscape, buildings, narratives, and place. The school will focus on one Newfoundland community: Quidi Vidi, a small village within St. John's.

Throughout the month of September, 2013, as part of their graduate program requirements, these students will be stationed in Quidi Vidi to learn about a variety of different cultural documentation methods, all from a folkloristic perspective. Some of their research endeavors will include oral history interviews, documentation photography, and floor-plan creation, ultimately aiming to capture some of the local culture and traditions.

Students are already getting a good introduction to the living history of Quidi Vidi. They started out with an informal meeting at Quidi Vidi Inn of Olde, with owner Linda Hennebury sharing her stories, seen in the photo above with Dr. Pocius (*photo by new PhD student Wang Xuan*). The next day, they trekked around the community with cultural geographer Dr. John Mannion. Over the three weeks, students will get tips and tricks of the trade from the Heritage Foundation's ICH office staff, Newfoundland photographer Brian Ricks, folklorist and archivist Guha Shankar of the US Library of Congress, and Ed Chappell, Director of the Department of Architectural and Archaeological Research at Colonial Williamsburg, as well as meeting and interviewing the locals of Quidi Vidi itself.

If you are interested in learning more about their work and research, the students will be blogging about their experiences in Quidi Vidi at:

<http://quidividischool.blogspot.com>

Wells and Springs Update

By Sarah Ingram

A lot of progress has been made in the wells and springs world since the last newsletter was released here at the Heritage Foundation. Since July, we have been all over the place here on the eastern side of Newfoundland: several areas in St. John's, Signal Hill, Oceans Pond, Makinsons, Clarke's Beach, Holyrood, Turks Gut, Marysvale, Colliers, Bay Bulls, Renew, Ferryland, Cupids, Flatrock, and Carbonear. Of the almost 50 wells and springs I have visited, almost all of them have been photographed and located by their GPS coordinates, and 32 have been measured in detail. These have ranged from natural, untouched springs, to hand dug, rock lined wells over a century old, to modern machine dug well.

I have seen tons of different wellhouses, lids, and water retrieval techniques, and seen incredibly clean, well taken care of wells, and open, uncovered, neglected old springs and water sources. I've seen it all, and along the way I have also had the privilege to talk to a lot of people, both those who use wells, find water, and remember collecting and using wells and springs as their sole water source.



There are two constant themes I have found through talking to people about their wells and using water: the taste of natural water, and respect for it. Every single person that I have talked to has told me about the pure, clean, cold taste of spring and well water from their childhood, or the present water source that they have, and how they prefer it over the chlorinated taste of tap water. Many people I have met and chatted with use local well or spring water in their homes even when they have access to city tap water. I also am amazed by the respect that used to be held, and still is, for natural water sources. Time and time again I hear about communities taking care of a public well, sharing a cup on the edge without anyone stealing or destroying it, and children taking care to not leave trash near the spring or well to keep it from spoiling.

I've also heard about how special a certain spring could be to those on a hike or playing on the neighbourhood. It's something that I personally have found amazing, because as someone who has only ever used tapped, city water, I never thought about respecting it, or the fear that someday the well might run dry. Relying on water from a natural source makes it more important to take care of it, and keep an eye on it, and prepare for emergencies.

Finally, my favourite little tidbit so far: trouts in wells. Traditionally, a trout was put down in a well to keep it clean: they ate carpenters, leaves and sediment that fell down into the water. I think it's adorable, and smart, and full of folkloric meaning and tradition. Unfortunately, however, it is something that few people practice intentionally anymore, as there are more effective ways of cleaning and testing water. However, I was lucky enough to find a well in Cupids, owned by Bernard Fitzpatrick, which still had a trout in it: 11 years and counting! I couldn't have been happier.

I've learned a lot, but I know there is still so much more out there. If you have any stories or memories of local wells and springs, or of carrying and using water, cleaning wells, or trout in wells, please let us know here at the Heritage Foundation! You can contact me through email at sarah@heritagefoundation.ca or call me at 739-1892 ext 7.

New Occasional Paper in ICH: Lych-gates in Newfoundland

New in the Heritage Foundation of NL's Occasional Papers in Intangible Cultural Heritage series is "Lych-gates in Newfoundland" by Dale Jarvis. A lych-gate is a covered wooden gateway with open sides at the entrance to a churchyard, providing a resting spot for a coffin. A common feature in English churchyards, the concept of the lych-gate was transplanted to the New World, and made its way into the vernacular architecture of Newfoundland. The publication documents three known lych-gates in Newfoundland, in the communities of Bonavista, St. John's and Corner Brook, with notes on their origins and use as part of the funeral ritual. The paper is available for download from www.mun.ca/ich/resources.



Digitizing the Baccalieu Trail Heritage Corporation Oral History Collection

By Nicole Penney

The Intangible Cultural Heritage Office, in partnership with the Baccalieu Trail Heritage Corporation, is excited to announce that we are currently in the process of uploading a substantial collection of oral histories onto Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador's Digital Archives Initiative.

These filmed oral histories were collected in 2005 by the Baccalieu Trail Heritage Corporation from over 40 elders who grew up in the area. The Baccalieu Trail Heritage Corporation is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to preserving, promoting and protecting the heritage of the Baccalieu Trail Region. In addition to their ongoing program of archaeological survey, excavation and interpretation, the Corporation has been involved in a wide range of heritage related projects since it was established in 1993.

This particular project includes memories of living and working in the area, going to school, children's games, home remedies, the first modes of transportation, supernatural beliefs and traditional industries, such as fishing. But these are just some of the topics discussed within these oral histories and this collection will appeal to not only academic researchers but anyone interested in the folklore and history of Newfoundland and Labrador.

One interview includes a legend about John Guy stopping for drinking water from Ship's Cove Pond in Port De Grave before continuing on to Cupids, while another includes a story about making moonshine in Cavendish. For those interested in gardens, this collection also touches on traditional farming practices and food sustainability. In one video, Roberts Andrews of Port De Grave discusses his boatbuilding techniques while showing off a pond boat in mid-construction. In another Mary Babbs (*right*) displays a beautiful handmade christening dress, now over 100 years old, which is said to have been worn by hundreds of babies in Bryant's Cove, and is still being used to this day.



Stayed tuned for more updates on the launch of this interesting collection of traditional knowledge from the Baccalieu Trail area.

Whether you're interested in curing a sore throat with a remedy of boiled molasses and pepper, or the best ways to make use of the caplin when they roll in, there's a little bit of something for everyone.

Headstone Rubbing Workshop

By Claire McDougall

On August 21st, we had our Headstone Rubbing Workshop at the St. John's General Protestant Cemetery. A small group of us spent a lovely sunny afternoon wandering between stones that date as far back as the mid-nineteenth century.

The workshop was led by Lisa Wilson, who opened up a general discussion about cemeteries and headstones before talking more specifically about the creation of gravestone rubbings. Taking a rubbing of a headstone can be a useful tool for capturing information that is interesting on several levels: the genealogical, the historical, and the aesthetic, among others.



The technique, however, is not without its detractors.

In some parts of the world, particularly in Europe and certain regions of the United States, the persistent and sometimes careless use of this technique has contributed to the degradation of certain stones. When impressions are repeatedly made of the same marker over time, the surface of the stone can be damaged.

The technique has not often been used in Newfoundland and Labrador, though; in a province where many old graveyards are no longer maintained, rubbings can be an invaluable resource, preserving at least some of what these old stones have to tell us before time and nature take their course.

Following our discussion, and a demonstration by Lisa, it was time to get our hands dirty, quite literally...

Using durable artist's paper and charcoal, we set to work taking impressions of some of the stones in the oldest section of the cemetery. Some participants chose to capture information about their own ancestors, while others chose stones for purely aesthetic reasons. Everyone I spoke to seemed to enjoy the process a great deal, most participants creating at least two rubbings. For my part, I love the fact that each stone

surprises you and teaches you something. The rubbings we created during the workshop were unique and beautiful. Quite apart from the information it conveys, each headstone rubbing is a work of art in its own right.

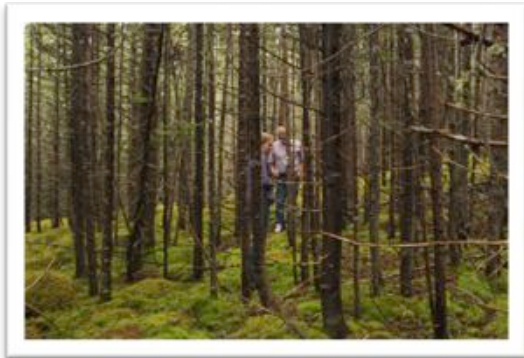
(photos by Dale Jarvis)



Clarke's Beach Reformed Cemetery

By Lisa Wilson

When Garry Bendell was growing up in Clarke's Beach he used to play with his friends in the Reformed Church Cemetery. This was in the mid-to-late 1960s and at the time, the cemetery was just beginning to look overgrown. The church itself was already gone, and small trees were popping up everywhere, though still barely big enough for the children to hide behind. There were several headstones scattered around, and a white picket fence edging the boundaries. During an on-site interview on July 31st, Garry pointed to the towering trees in front of us, "I don't know how far it goes back but this is where the Reformed cemetery was, and the entrance to it used to be a foot walkway up to it from the main road." By Garry's estimate, the shrubs of his youth have grown to be 20 to 30 feet tall. Nowadays there is no indication that a cemetery was ever on this site. The picket-fence is now gone and if you know where to look, you can find a single remaining headstone in the trees. This headstone belongs to Isaac Snow who died on December 2nd, 1908. Moss is growing all around it and it is easy to imagine that in another few years it won't be visible at all.



Garry Bendell and Roland Andrews are both longtime residents of Clarke's Beach and current members of the local Heritage Committee. They invited myself and Claire McDougall (as representatives of the Heritage Foundation) to join them in an exploration of this forgotten burial site. Though still in its planning stages, the idea is to eventually do a cemetery clean-up project in hopes of protecting what remains of the headstones. The heritage group believes that nowadays many local residents don't even know that a cemetery is located here. They also feel that if some of the fallen headstones can be found and preserved, it will spark community interest in heritage-related issues.

During our visit, Gary was able to share some information about the cemetery property: "I've got an old map that shows all the different land in Clarke's Beach. This was not listed as a 'property' but I know where the gravesite is so I know the property that's entailed for the site. It shows the detail-- it's in the shape of a pie." I then asked if there are any Parish records available to tell us who might be buried in the Reformed Cemetery. Bendell replied that some church records do exist for this cemetery. "It was a Reverend Goodchild that was here at that time. He's buried over at the old Salvation Army Cemetery, which was the Reformed Church and school site... We have documentation of some of the names of people who were buried here, and we know that there are a number of white headstones, but we just don't know where they are located on the site." With documentation about who was buried there, it will be interesting to see if a search of the site can uncover specific burial plots for these individuals. Indeed this fall, Bendell, Andrews and other members of the group will spend a day looking to see what they can find. With help from the heritage foundation, who will provide best practices for cemetery clean up, Clarke's Beach Heritage may be adding another cemetery to their list of local heritage sites to visit.

***Give us a hand? The gravesite of Rev. W. Goodchild, who is listed as a Reformed Episcopalian resident of Clarke's Beach in 1898 (by way of his will), is unmarked in the Salvation Army Cemetery. His birth and death dates are currently unknown by the Heritage group. If you happen to have this information, please get in touch: lisa@heritagefoundation.ca.**

(photos by Claire McDougall and Lisa Wilson)



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